

Baton Rouge, Texas trade transplants with New Orleans region, census data show

The Times-Picayune April 12, 2012



By [Michelle Krupa, The Times-Picayune](#)

It will surprise no one to learn that the [U.S. Census Bureau](#) has established that, in the half-decade after [Hurricane Katrina](#), more people moved from the New Orleans region to the Houston, Baton Rouge and Dallas areas -- and from those places to New Orleans -- than anywhere else in the world. It's the next three places from which new arrivals hailed that may grab some attention: Asia, Europe and Central America each contributed more than 1,000 people to the local population over the five-year period.



Recent census data show that between 2005 and 2009, nearly 116,000 people moved into the seven-parish New Orleans region, while about 61,000 moved out.

Tulane University geographer [Richard Campanella](#), who analyzed the data, said the discovery shouldn't shock anyone, given the fact that Europe and Asia are each home to hundreds of millions of people. Similar bumps might well be seen in any other five-year period, he said. "It's no surprise," he said, "though I think a lot of readers will say, 'Wow, we really are European.'"

Central America is much smaller, but Campanella suspects many immigrants from that region landed here searching for work in the booming recovery economy.

The latest census data track the movement of people between U.S. counties -- and to and from countries around the globe -- during the five-year period that happens to align neatly with the Katrina upheaval.

Respondents to the [American Community Survey](#), which has replaced the long-form questionnaire, were asked whether they lived in the same residence one year before the survey date. Those who answered no were asked to provide their old addresses.

The bureau collected data annually from a small portion of the population, and results were estimated and averaged over the five-year period.

Census statistician Kin Koerber said the rapid emptying of the New Orleans region after Katrina and the protracted trickle back of residents -- along with the arrival of newcomers -- all has been aggregated into estimates that represent the area's migration patterns from 2005 to 2009.

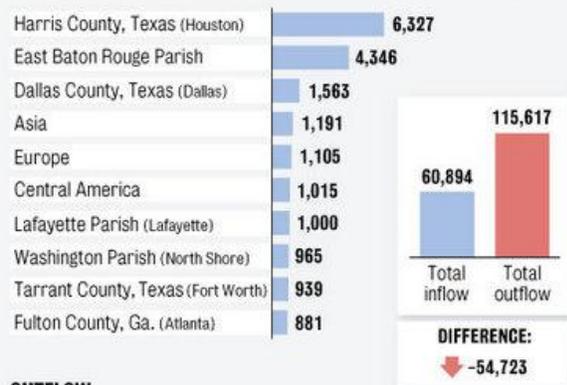
"The exodus out and people coming back, it's going to be averaged over those five years," he said.

RESIDENTIAL INFLOW AND OUTFLOW

The U.S. Census Bureau recently released data on the movement of people between counties. The American Community Survey, which has replaced the long-form questionnaire, asked respondents whether they lived in the same residence one year before the survey date. Those who answered 'no' were asked to provide their old address. The bureau collected data annually between 2005 and 2009 from a portion of the population; results were estimated and averaged over the five-year period.

INFLOW

96,180 people moved into one of the seven parishes in the New Orleans region between 2005 and 2009, including 35,286 who moved within the seven-parish area; 60,894 moved from somewhere outside the region.



OUTFLOW

151,859 people moved out of one of the seven parishes in the New Orleans region between 2005 and 2009, including 36,242 who moved within the seven-parish area; 115,617 people moved to somewhere outside the region.



For those who left, proximity to southeast Louisiana and size tended to dictate where they landed, Campanella said. Beyond major Texas cities and Baton Rouge, he pointed down the list to Tangipahoa Parish and Lafayette, and to dense areas around Fort Worth, Texas, and Atlanta.

Apart from overseas transplants, the trend also ran in reverse. "The closer and larger the city is, the more it contributed" residents to the region, Campanella said, adding that any of those were likely Katrina evacuees returning.

Because the survey didn't track individuals, there's no way to know how many of those who reported leaving the region after Katrina also came back during the five-year period.

In all, nearly 116,000 people left the seven-parish New Orleans area and about 61,000 moved in, the data show.

Meanwhile, about 35,000 people moved across parish lines within the region, with the largest number trading addresses in Orleans and Jefferson. About 11,800 New Orleanians moved to the suburban enclave and about 7,100 people left Jefferson Parish for the city.

Only Harris County, Texas -- home to Houston -- took in more New Orleanians over the period, with about 12,300 transplants, the data show.

"This is almost definitely a Katrina diaspora that has become permanent," Campanella said.

"There's a perfect example of the significance of proximity but also the significance of magnitude," he added. "Houston is 10 times the size of Jefferson, but Jefferson is 100 times closer and they're almost on top of each other" in terms of the number of New Orleans residents who moved there.

The data also confirm an influx of residents to St. Tammany Parish from St. Bernard, Orleans and Jefferson parishes.